क्या यह सच है कि सरकार को देश के हितों के संरक्षण का यह उत्तरदायित्व एक प्राइवेट फर्म की सौंपना पड़ा है?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री दिनेश सिंह): (क) जी, हां।

(ख) भारतीय राजदूतावास, वाशिंगटन ने 12 जनवरी, 1994 को डेनियल जे॰ ई॰ डेलमेन की निगमित नामक जन सम्पर्क फर्म सहित मैसर्स मिकोलिफ, कैली राफेल्ली विधि फर्म की सेवाएं लेने के लिए एक करार पर हस्ताक्षर किए। शुरू में यह संविदा छह माह की अवधि के लिए कुल मिलाकर प्रति माह 46,000 अमरीकी डालर की दर पर है।

(ग) जी, हां।

(घ) यह बताया जाता है कि मैसर्स मिकोलिफ, कैली एण्ड राफेल्ली ने थाइलैण्ड तथा तुर्की के हितों का प्रतिनिधित्व किया है। वाशिंगटन में तुर्की राजदूतावास द्वारा इसकी सेवाएं अभी भी ली जा रही हैं।

सरकार ने अमरीका में बढ़ते हुए भारत विरोधी प्रोपेगेंडा को देखते हुए एक व्यावसायिक फर्म की सेवाएं लेने का निर्णय लिया था।

यह निर्णय इस उद्देश्य से लिया गया कि इस प्रकार के प्रोपेगेंडा का प्रभावी रूप से खंडन किया जा सके तथा अमरीका में हमारे मिशन/केन्द्रों द्वारा भारत के दृष्टिकोण को बलपूर्वक प्रस्तुत करने से उनके प्रयासों में सहायता प्रदान की जा सके।

इस फर्म के साथ सम्पन्न करार में यह प्रावधान शामिल है कि उसके कार्य की समीक्षा की जाएगी और हितों के टकराव की स्थिति में इसे समाप्त कर दिया जाएगा।

Extradition Treaty with USA and Other Countries

251. SHRI BISHAMBER NATH PANDE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is shortly going to sign extradition treaty with the United States on the Lines of Indo-British Extradition Treaty to fight international terrorism;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what positive steps Government propose to take in the direction of signing such treaties with other countries, alongwith the names of the countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) India and USA held one round of negotiations in September, 1993 to conclude a new extradition treaty, A second round is yet to be held. An extradition treaty will be signed between the two countries after the negotiations are completed at the technical level and results evaluated by the Governments.

(b) It is premature to disclose the details of the negotiations at this stage.

(c) India is proposing to conclude agreements on extradition with Hong Kong, Germany, France and UAE, in respect of which consultations/ negotiations are being held.

Visit of Official Delegation from Bangladesh

252. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an official delegation of Bangladesh visited the country recently for talks on some of the outstanding issues between the two countries;

(b) if so, the details of the talks and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that this delegation refused to visit some of the Bangladesh refugee settlements to get an understanding of the problem;

(d) whether the problem of Bangladesh nationals crossing over the border and settling in States like Assam, Bihar and West Bengal was also discussed with the said delegation; and

(e) if so, the details and outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P.M. SAYEED): (a) A Bangladesh delegation led by the Director General of Bangladesh Rifles visited India in January, 1994 to discuss border related matters.

(b) Revival of the arrangements between Border Security Force and Bangladesh Rifles which were put in operation in September, 1991 for push back of illegal Bangladesh immigrants, infiltration of illegal immigrants, aid to insurgents, trans-border crimes, demarcation of the boundary and tension in Muhuri Char area were some of the main issues discussed in the meeting. Both sides agreed to expedite demarcation of boundary and to increase mutual cooperation in eradicating the menace of smuggling. The Bangladesh authorities were urged to put an end to negative activities along the border.

(c) The Bangladesh delegation did not show interest in visiting the areas in Delhi having Bangladeshi population.

(d) & (e) Yes, Sir. It was agreed that further discussion would take place in the meeting of the Joint Working Group comprising officials of the Home Ministries of the two countries and others concerned.

Strike in Pakistan in Support of Kashmiris' Demand of Right to Self Determination

253. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD: SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the strike observed in Pakistan to protest against the Indian action in Kashmir and to express solidarity with the Kashmiris demanding their right to self determination; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A nationwide strike was observed in Pakistan on 5 February, 1994 to express solidarity with the people of Jammu & Kashmir. This strike was supported by the Government of Pakistan. This is the fifth consecutive year that such a strike has been observed in Pakistan.

It is regrettable that the Government of Pakistan is continuing to associate itself with activities of this kind which only inflame public opinion, incite violence and which do not help, in any way whatsoever, in facilitating a climate of relations in which meaningful discussions are possible to settle differences bilaterally and through peaceful negotiations.

Conditions put by Pakistan for Holding Indo-Pak Talks

254. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Pakistan has put any condition for holding the next round of Indo-Pak talks; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At the Foreign Secretary level talks held between India and Pakistan at Islamabad from 1—3, January, 1994 the two sides reiterated the need to engage in a bilateral dialogue. Government expressed its readiness to draw a schedule for further talks. Pakistan, however, was unwilling to commit itself to any timeframe for further talks and attempted to link the scheduling of future talks with the ground situation in J&K including level of security forces deployed against terrorists in J&K and discussion on the modalities of a plebiscite, which Government have consistently regarded as unacceptable.